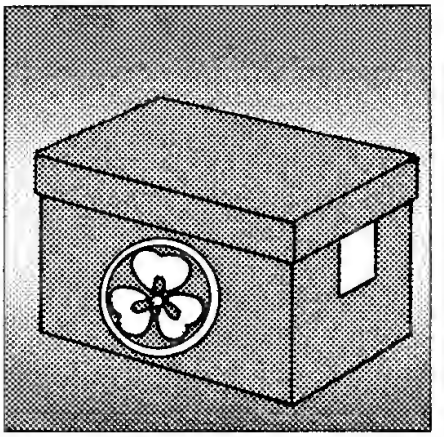
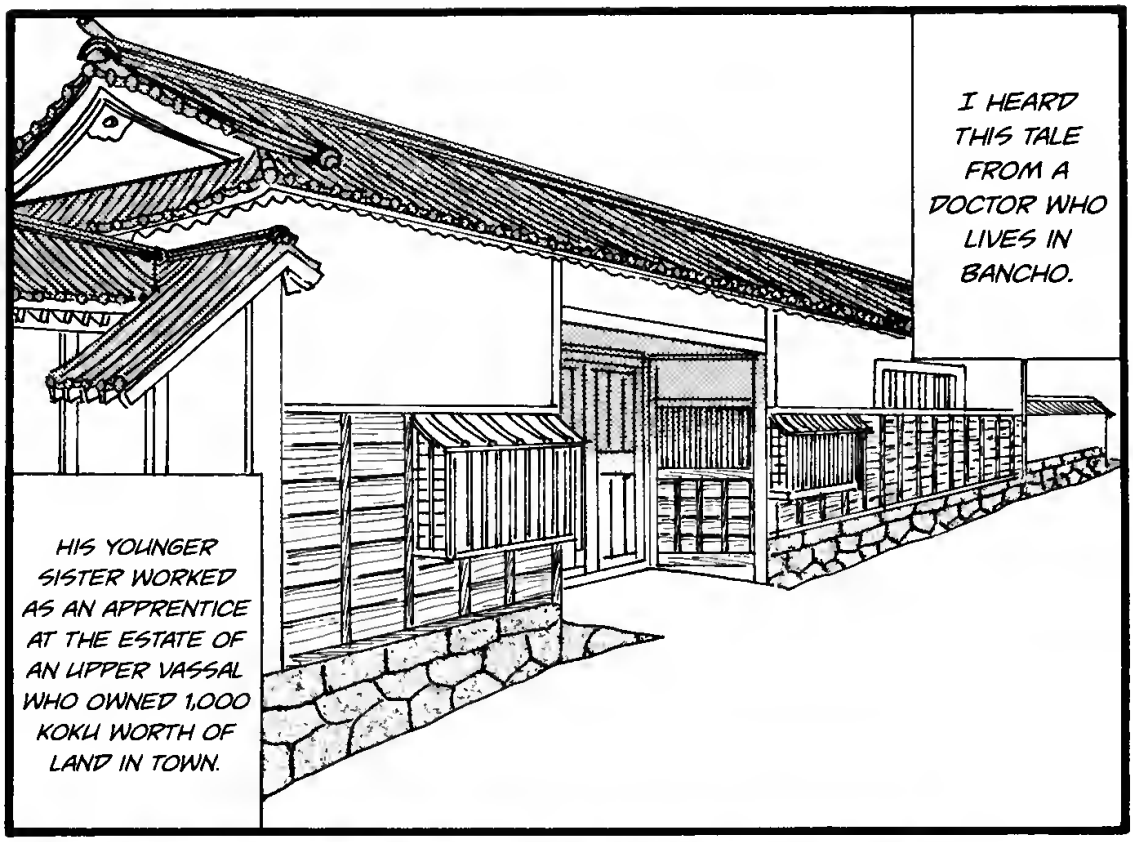
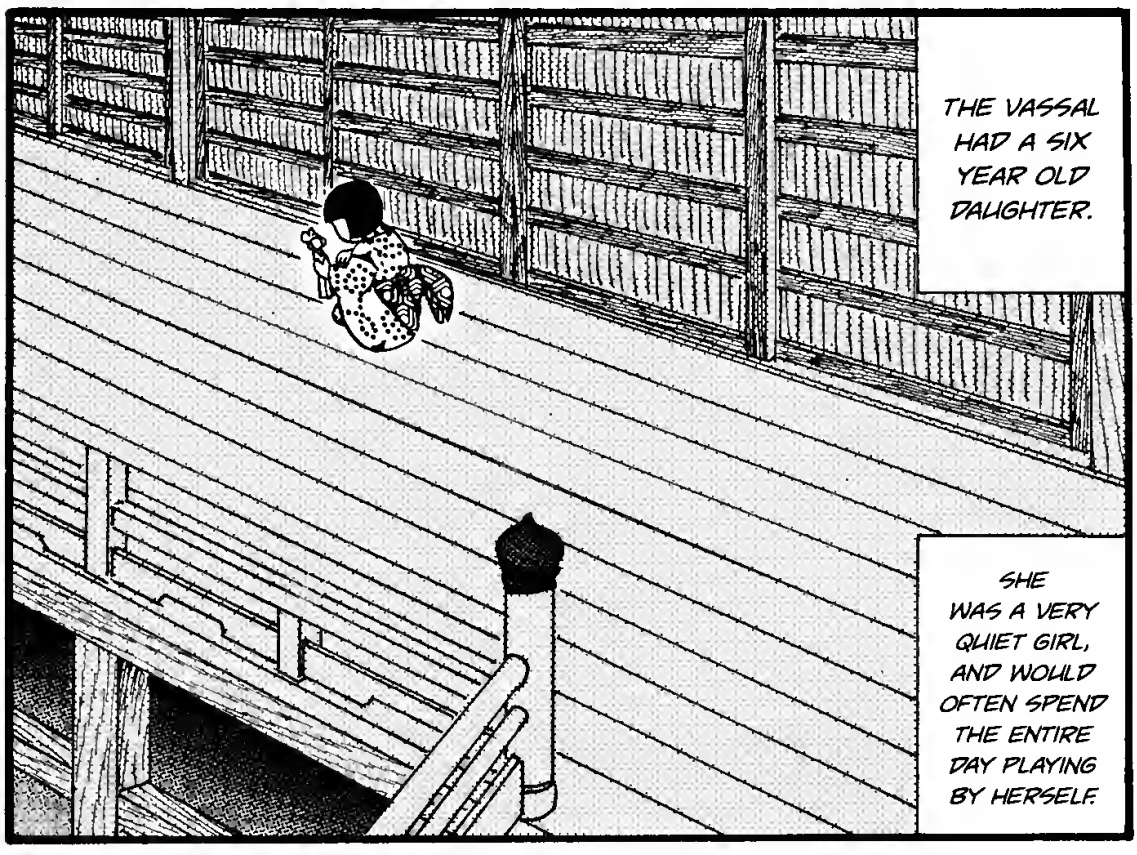
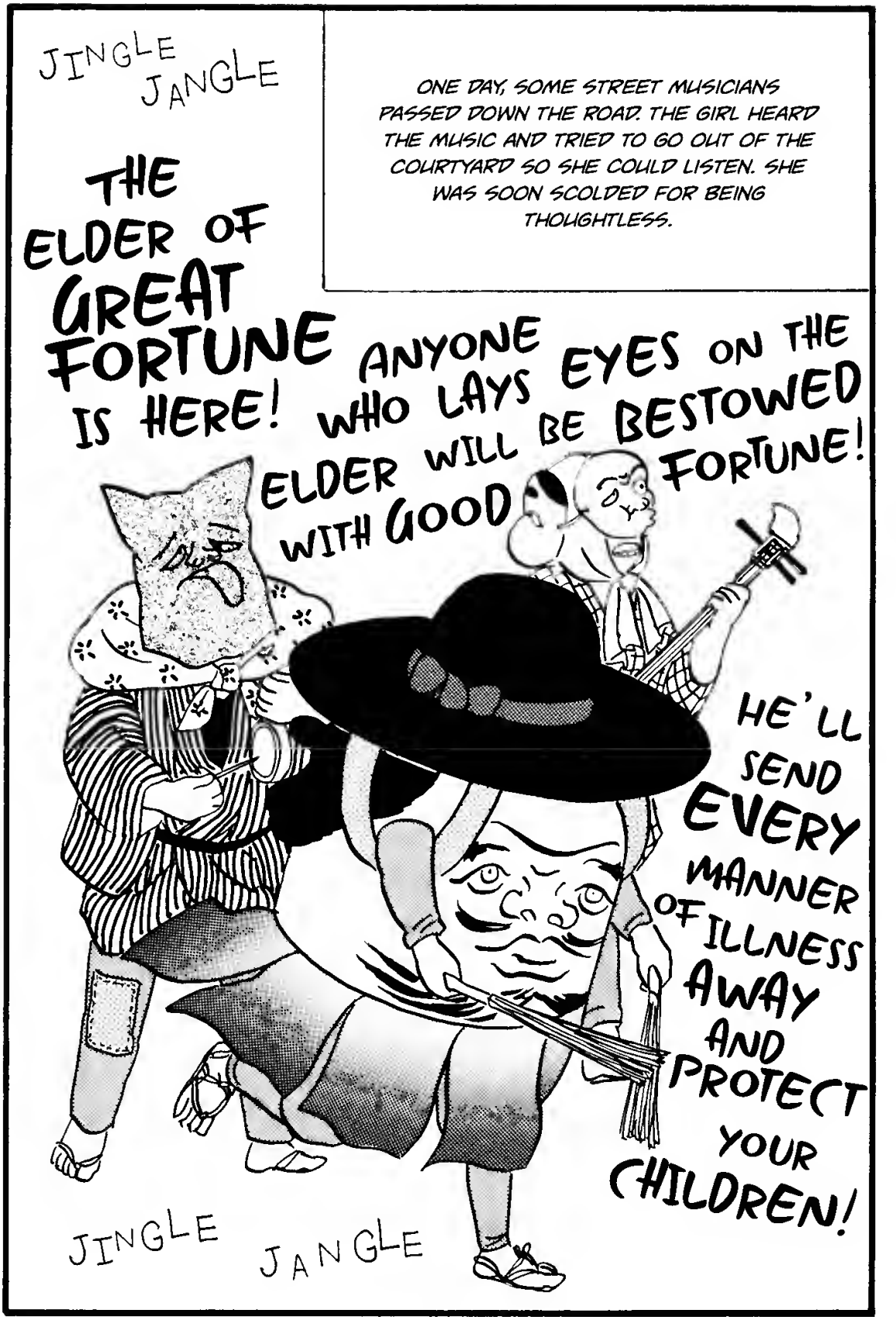
Tale 22

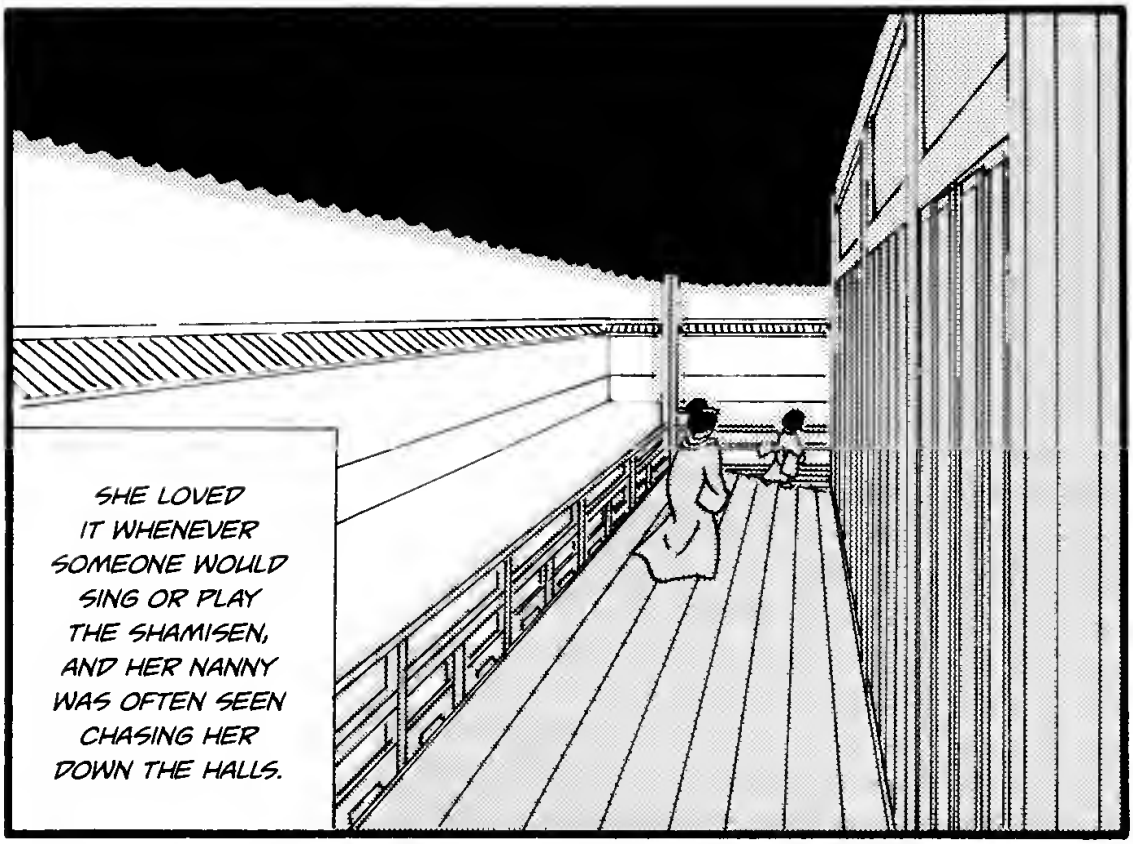
Inside the Chest

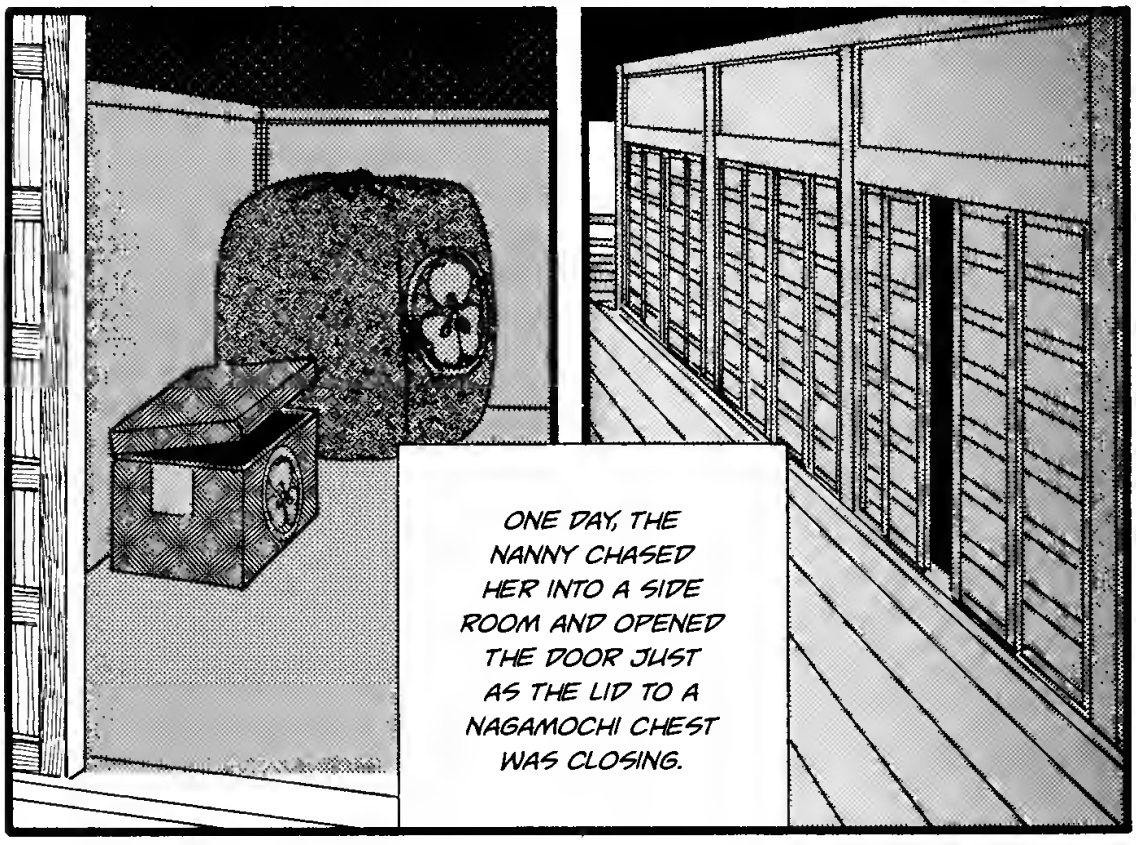


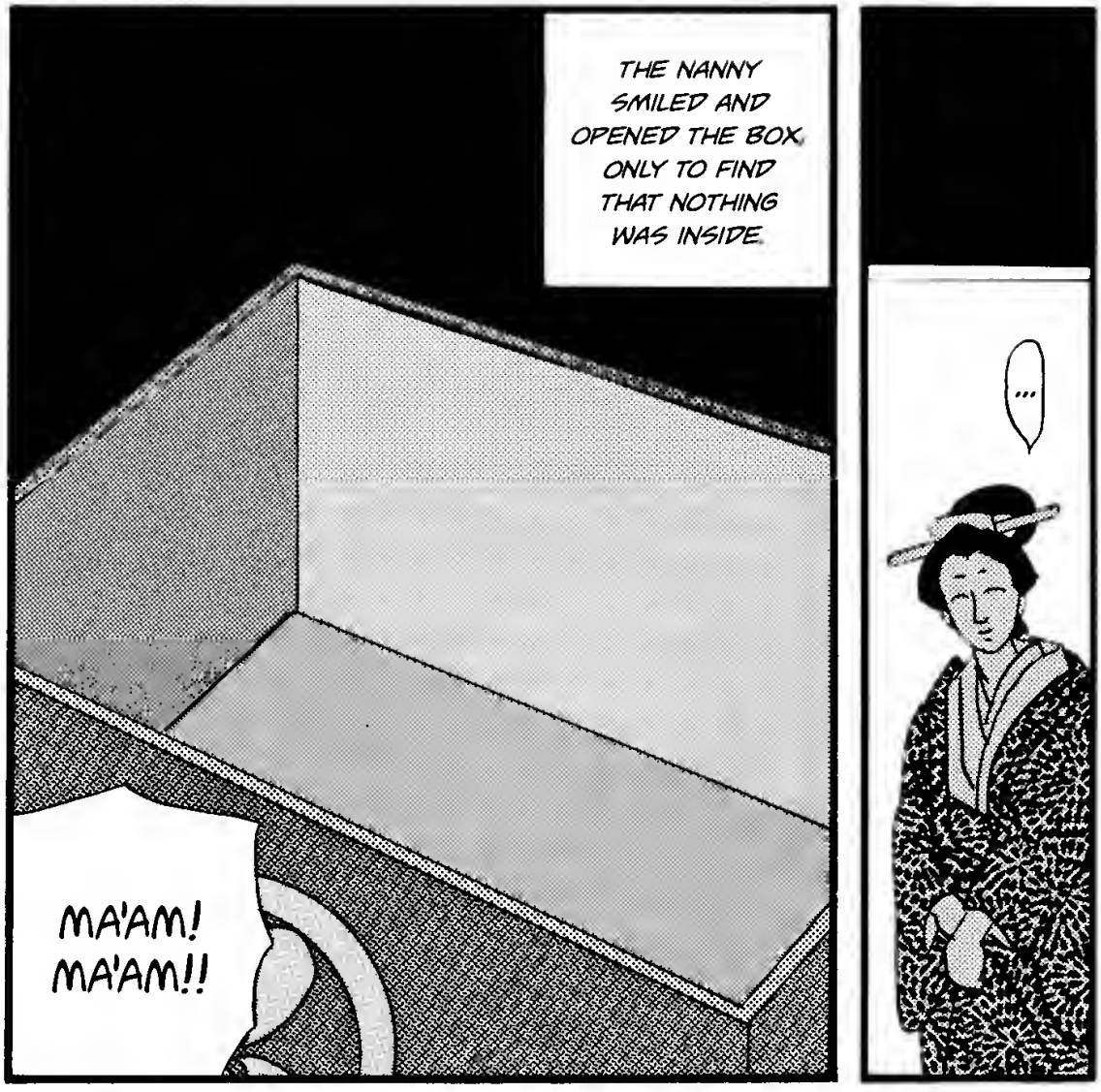

I HEARD THIS TALE FROM A DOCTOR WHO LIVES IN BANCHO.
HIS YOUNGER SISTER WORKED AS AN APPRENTICE AT THE ESTATE OF AN UPPER VASSAL WHO OWNED 1,000 KOKU WORTH OF LAND IN TOWN.

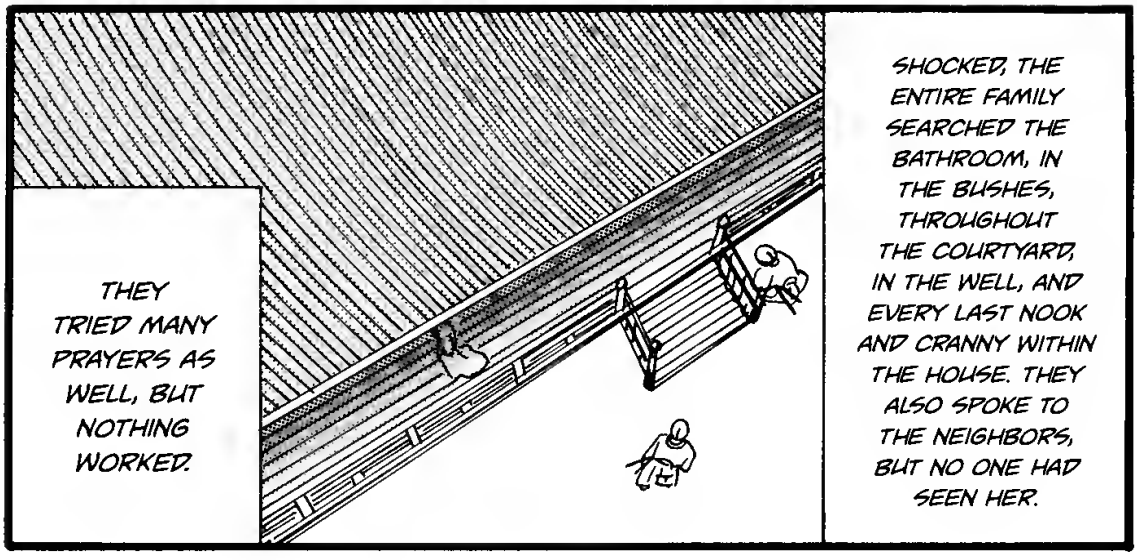

THE VASSAL HAD A SIX YEAR OLD DAUGHTER.
SHE WAS A VERY QUIET GIRL, AND WOULD OFTEN SPEND THE ENTIRE DAY PLAYING BY HERSELF.

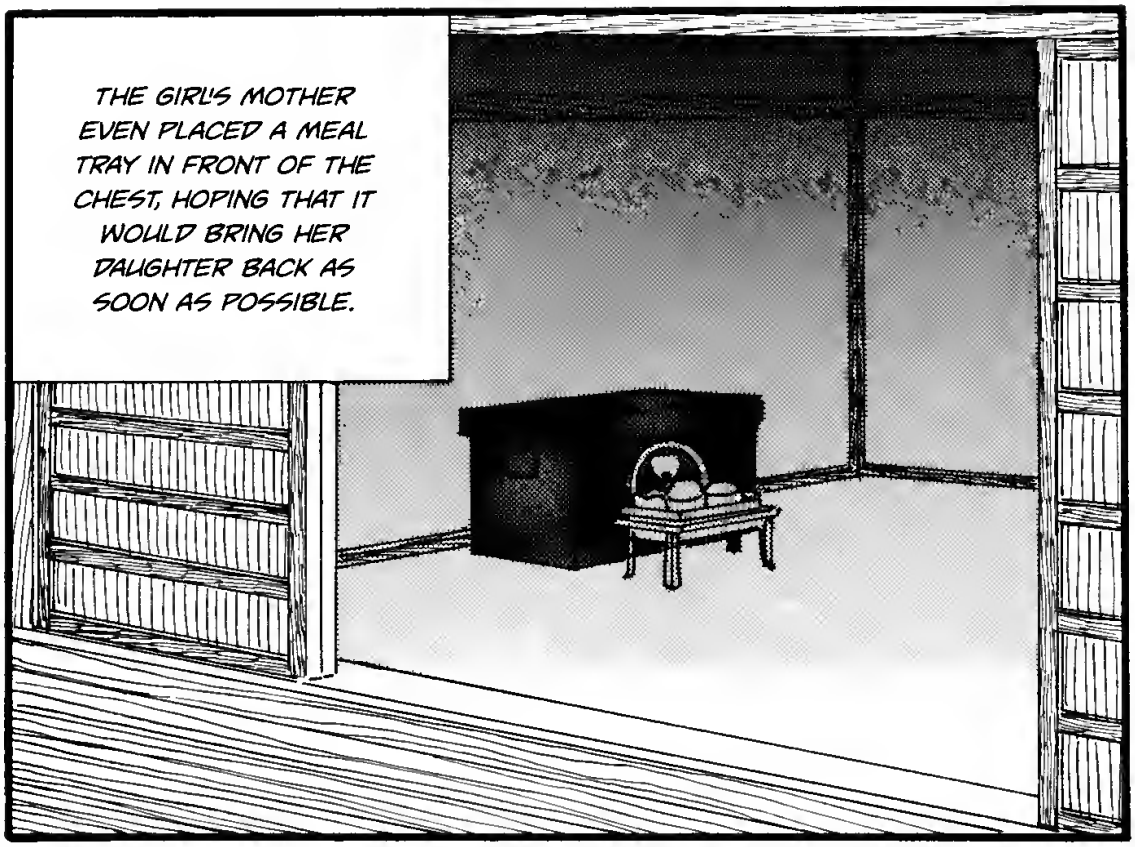

JINGLE JANGLE
ONE DAY, SOME STREET MUSICIANS PASSED DOWN THE ROAD. THE GIRL HEARD THE MUSIC AND TRIED TO GO OUT OF THE COURTYARD SO SHE COULD LISTEN. SHE WAS SOON SCOLDED FOR BEING THOUGHTLESS.
THE ELDER OF GREAT FORTUNE IS HERE!
ANYONE WHO LAYS EYES ON THE ELDER WILL BE BESTOWED WITH GOOD FORTUNE!
HE'LL SEND EVERY MANNER OF ILLNESS AWAY AND PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN!
JINGLE JANGLE

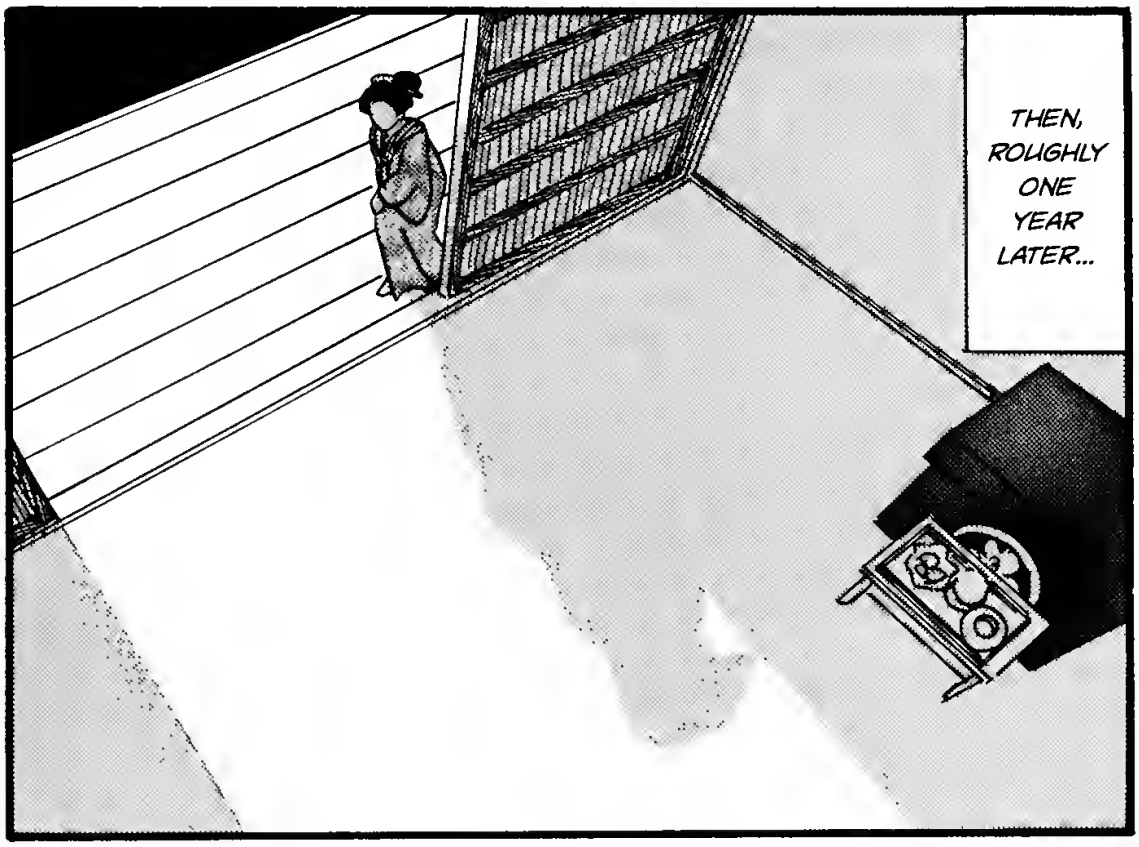

SHE LOVED IT WHENEVER SOMEONE WOULD SING OR PLAY THE SHAMISEN, AND HER NANNY WAS OFTEN SEEN CHASING HER DOWN THE HALLS.

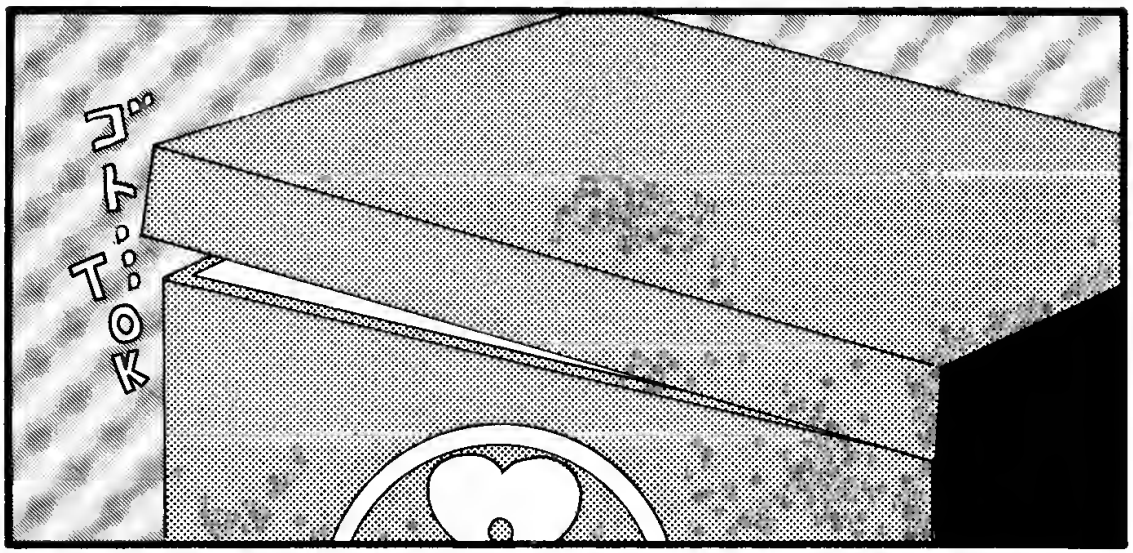

ONE DAY, THE NANNY CHASED HER INTO A SIDE ROOM AND OPENED THE DOOR JUST AS THE LID TO A NAGAMOCHI CHEST WAS CLOSING.

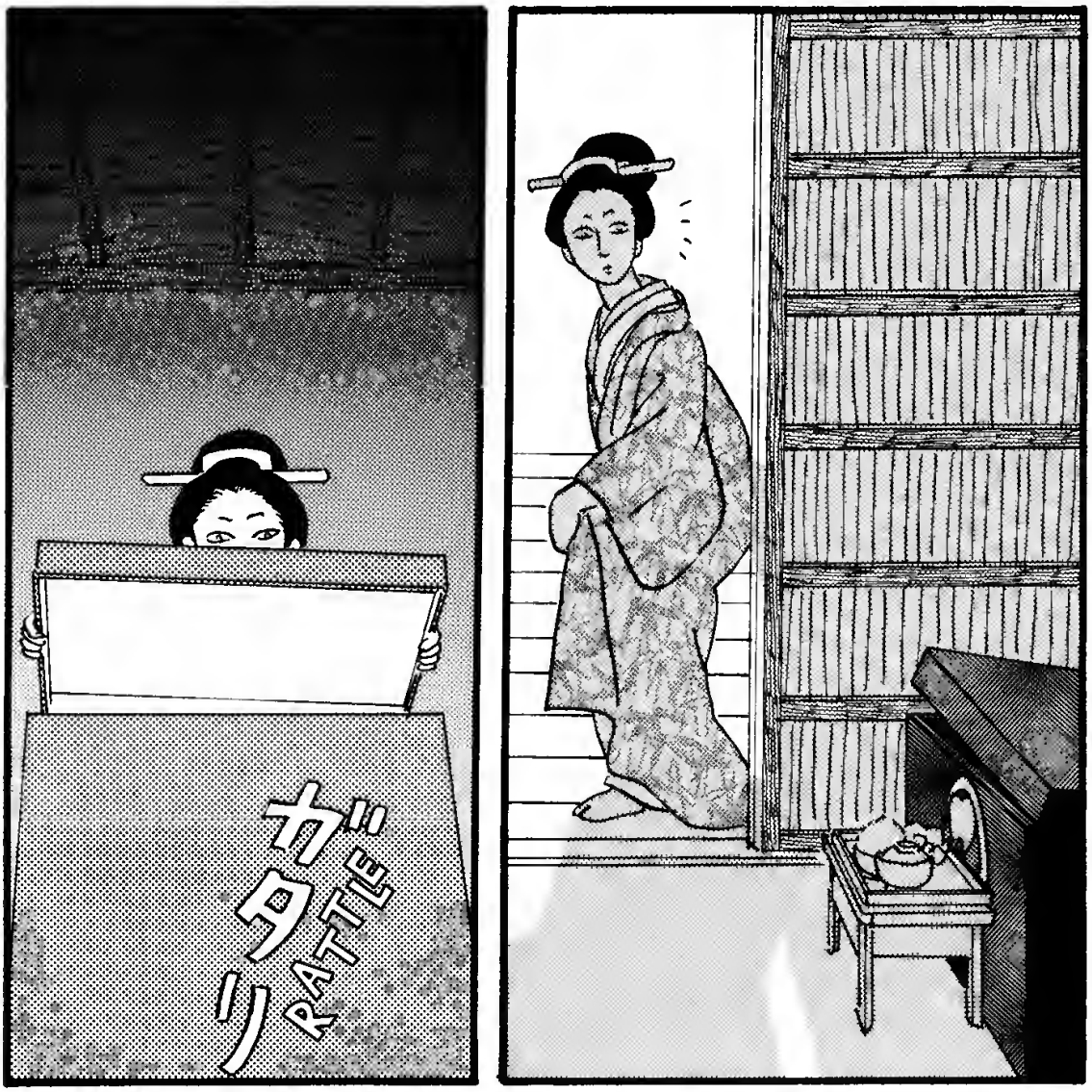

THE NANNY SMILED AND OPENED THE BOX, ONLY TO FIND THAT NOTHING WAS INSIDE.
MA'AM! MA'AM!!
...


THEY TRIED MANY PRAYERS AS WELL, BUT NOTHING WORKED.
SHOCKED, THE ENTIRE FAMILY SEARCHED THE BATHROOM, IN THE BUSHES, THROUGHOUT THE COURTYARD, IN THE WELL, AND EVERY LAST NOOK AND CRANNY WITHIN THE HOUSE. THEY ALSO SPOKE TO THE NEIGHBORS, BUT NO ONE HAD SEEN HER.


THE GIRL'S MOTHER EVEN PLACED A MEAL TRAY IN FRONT OF THE CHEST, HOPING THAT IT WOULD BRING HER DAUGHTER BACK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.


THEN, ROUGHLY ONE YEAR LATER...


ゴト：TOK


ガタ
RATTLE

THE GIRL WAS SITTING THERE, IN PERFECT CONDITION. THEY ASKED HER MANY QUESTIONS, BUT ALL SHE COULD REMEMBER IS CRAWLING INSIDE THE BOX AND DOZING OFF.
NOTHING ELSE HAPPENED AFTER THAT, AND THE GIRL WAS 15 OR 16 AT THE TIME THAT I HEARD THE STORY.